FIRST COMICS
LIMITED SERIES

OKAY, SO WE LIED!

FEB.
NO. 4
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DYNAMO 5OE™

Dynamo Joe

OUR STORY SO FAR...

LIFE IN THE 25.5TH CENTURY

It is a new age, more than a thousand years hence, yet human nature has changed little. The forces and conditions that have bred wars in the centuries gone by now breed a different kind of war, a new breed of warrior. One of these new warriors is the robosoldier **Dynamo Joe**. This is his story.

Only three civilizations exist in our spiral of the galaxy, the greatest being the **Terran Confederation**, centered on Earth. The galaxy is shared with the cat-like **Tavitans**, with their home planet of Londree, and a benign master race, the **Imperium**, led by the enigmatic, immortal **Magna Khan**.

Ten years before the start of this story, the Confederation was battling slavers and pirates. Then **R'thim**, matriarch of the Tavitans, prompted by an inner instinct of her her people, forged the first comprehensive arms and economic treaty -- the **Alliance** -- between the Tavitans, the Confederation, and the Imperium as a bulwark against the doom she scented in the cosmic winds.

Shortly thereafter, the planets at the Galactic rim fell under attack by a bizarre extra-galactic **Enemy**. The foe moved at sub-light speeds, in an obsessive straight-line, devouring planets in its path. All attempts at communication were frustrated; no envoys returned alive.

To combat this extra-galactic threat the Dynamo-class battlesuits were created -- humanoid in form to be adaptable to a wide variety of environments. Carrying a crew of two, the suits were the "grunts" of what came to be known as the **Orion War**, the long war of attrition which the Alliance was steadily losing.

The war raged on for eight years before the Alliance discovered that the mysterious enemy, now called the **Mellanares**, actually consisted of millions of microscopic organisms linked together to form a single group consciousness, and that it was their ability to read minds that made the Mellanares war machines so effective and so deadly.

It was the crew of **Dynamo Joe** that made both these discoveries.

The two man crew of Dynamo Joe consists of:

1) **Sergeant Elanian Daro**: citizen of the Imperium, a paramilitary society devoted to physical perfection and the eventual creation of the "perfect human." Even though they control only a few star systems, they are considered a major power due to their unshakable unity and their fighting prowess.

Daro had managed to achieve the rank of captain, but was broken back to sergeant when he covered for a superior officer's error in a previous conflict. The stigma of his alleged error has plagued his career ever since.

2) **Private Pomru Purrr-wakawaka**: a young Tavitan out to see the Universe. Male Tavitans tend to be very excitable before they mature and make enthusiastic soldiers. Not great, but enthusiastic. Pomru is an ardent fan of old Earth culture and mimics it whenever he can. This is not a trait shared by his fellow Tavitans, who consider him a little odd. He is a superb mechanic and tinkerer and is constantly modifying the battle-suit. This is of great annoyance to the Tavitan Over-Sergeant Kaeto, who is positive that for every two modifications that he manages to find and have Pomru remove, there's another he missed.

Just prior to the start of this issue, the Alliance launches operation **Boldshot Brimfire**, which relies upon the Mellanares' ability to read minds. After a fierce space battle the order is given to retreat. An apparent debacle! As the Enemy passes apparently destroyed Alliance battleships, they are revealed to be "Trojan Horses" -- concealing the new **Galax-C** robosoldiers. They had remained hidden to the Mellanares thanks to a recent Tavitan invention, a sub-space cloaking device which rendered them invisible to the Enemy. The confused Enemy are attacked from all sides and retreat for the first time in the Orion War.

Flush with this first victory, the Alliance is hard at work in the space fortress of **Sigma Base 6**, determined to make the next phase the true turning point in the Orion War.

NEXT MONTH: A mysterious and ominously silent superbattlesuit lends some unexpected help during a firefight. But the crew of Dynamo Joe has to wonder -- is the newcomer really on their side? By **Phil Foglio, Doug Rice** and **Brian Thomas**. Plus: Cargonauts by Foglio and **Paul Guinan.**

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DYNAMO JOE™

DETONATE SUPERATOMICS!

THE ORION WAR HAD ENTERED A NEW PHASE...

POINT OF NO RETURN

SCRIPT: PHIL FOGLIO PENCILS: DOUG RICE INKS: BRIAN THOMAS
LETTERS: KEN HOLEWCZYNSKI COLORS: RICK TAYLOR EDITOR: RICK OLIVER

THE STAR SYSTEM OF PROCYON. THE NEW BEACHHEAD.

GOOD JOB, PEOPLE.

ALLAH AKBAR, WHAT A SIGHT.

NOW THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT THE ARMY. YOU GET TO TRAVEL TO EXOTIC, FAR OFF STARS, SEE STRANGE AND EXOTIC PLANETS... AND THEN BLOW THEM UP.

KNOCK IT OFF, RICHMOND, THEY'RE JUST DEAD MOONS AND PLANETOIDS. IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE SHUTTING DOWN A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE MELLANARES ADVANCE INTO OUR GALAXY HAD BEEN HALTED.

THE ALLIANCE WAS DETERMINED TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

CONGRATULATIONS, SPECTRE SQUADRON. NICE PLACEMENT, SQUADRON LEADER.

ROGER, TROJAN ONE, IT'S ALL YOURS, READY FOR TRANSPORT. TRY NOT TO DROP ANYTHING.

WITH THE HIGH COMMAND CHARGING US FOR BREAKAGE? FAT CHANCE!

SPECTRE SQUADRON, PREPARE TO RETURN TO BASE.

HOT PUPPIES! TIME FOR A LITTLE R&B!

DYNAMO JOE TO BASE 6, COME IN PLEASE...

SIGMA BASE OBSERVATION DECK.

WE'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD FROM SPECTRE SQUADRON, GENERAL. PROCYON 3C IS READY FOR TRANSPORT. I THINK YOU'LL AGREE THAT THE **ARTIFICIAL ASTEROID BELT** IS PROCEDING ON SCHEDULE. LET'S SEE THE MELLANARES PLOW THRU **THAT!**

"A **WALL** TO STOP THE ENEMY IN IT'S TRACKS". THAT DESCRIPTION HAS BEEN USED **BEFORE**, MR. KIRCHNER, FOR THE BRAINCHILD OF A CERTAIN GENERAL **MAGINOT** BACK ON EARTH.

HUMPH. THE **KIRCHNER BELT** WILL NOT BE ANOTHER MAGINOT LINE, GENERAL IPPOLITOV.

WE SHALL SEE.

"THE TAVITAN SUB-SPACE DISRUPTERS AND THE GALAX-C BATTLESUITS OF THE IMPERIUM HAVE CHANGED THIS WAR, KIRCHNER. THE MELLANARES NO LONGER RELY ON THE MASSIVE FRONTAL ASSAULTS WE ARE USED TO.*

"THEY NOW USE THE 'BLITZKREIG', THE LIGHTNING WAR -- STAGING A QUICK ATTACK AND THEN PULLING BACK ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. THEY ARE TESTING US.

"WE ARE ALSO SEEING A MUCH WIDER VARIETY OF ENEMY WAR MACHINE DESIGNS. I BELIEVE THEY ARE ATTEMPING TO GENERATE THEIR OWN VERSION OF THE GALAX-CS.

"SO FAR THEY HAVE BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL AND CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO CRUSH US BY SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS. USUALLY AN ACCEPTABLE STRATEGY, DA?"

*SEE DYNAMO JOE 1-5 -- RAO

WE CANNOT EVEN ATTACK THIS 'CORE' THEY SO ZEALOUSLY PROTECT. AS SOON AS WE PERFECTED WEAPONS THAT COULD HARM IT, IT WAS PULLED BACK.

"EVEN SIGMA BASE'S LONG RANGE SCANNERS CANNOT LOCATE IT.

"WE MUST SEND DYNAMO-CLASS SUITS EQUIPPED WITH **DEEP SPACE SCANNERS** BEYOND THE BELT — BUT SO FAR, THEY HAVE FOUND **NOTHING**.

"AND SO WE DESTROY THE MOONS OF THE PROCYON SYSTEM TO BUILD YOUR BELT."

AND WE WAIT.

WELL, THANKS FOR THE HISTORY LESSON, GENERAL, BUT I'M DUE DOWN IN SECTION R.

GENERAL, WE'VE GOT SOMETHING **ODD**... A STRANGE **ENERY SOURCE** IN SECTION 5.

MY NAME'S **CLANTON** I WAS TOLD I GOTTA SEE GENERAL IPPOLITOV?

OVER THERE.

THE CORE?!

NOSSIR - NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT **BEFORE**.

HMMM. DIVERT THE NEAREST DYNAMO SQUADRON FOR RECONNAIS-SANCE.

OORG! HEY SARGE — WE'VE GOT ORDERS TO RECON SOMETHING IN SECTOR 5.

MELLANARES?

THEY DON'T KNOW— WE'RE GETTING A REAL PIG IN A POKER.

SEND THEM A CONFIRMATION.

SPECTRE SQUADRON— NEW COURSE TS5101 EXECUTE!

KEEP YOUR SCANNERS OPEN FOR ANYTHING UNUSUAL.

YOU MEAN LIKE A FURLOUGH?

BACK AT BASE 6

LET'S GO, THEY'RE WAITING.

WHERE'S YOUR HANGAR PASS, SIR?

OH. UM... WHY, HERE IT IS, PRIVATE.

WHOP!

SO AS YOU CAN SEE, MR. CLANTON, WE COULD USE YOU AND YOUR SHIP HERE.

I'M RIGHT SORRY, GENERAL BUT I WANT NO PART OF A MILITARY OPERATION.

SIR! A SHIP IS ATTEMPTING TO MAKE AN UNAU-THORIZED EXIT!

WHICH ONE?

THE SEVEN SISTERS – OUT OF MARSPORT.

WHAT? BUT THAT'S MY SHIP!

GENERAL, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

SECURITY?

NO RESPONSE SIR.

WAIT... SOMEBODY IS IN CONTROL BAY 3... DAMMIT, HE'S IGNORING MY OVERRIDE ORDER!

GET SECURITY THERE NOW! I WANT... CLANTON! STOP!!

THE HELL WITH THAT GENERAL THAT'S MY SHIP AND IT'S PAID FOR!!

GODDAM WHERE THE HELL IS TAYLOR THAT PINHEAD USELESS SCREWUP I'LL KILL THE LOUSY ION KISSING GREASE EATER...

THIS IS SIGMA CONTROL TO SEVEN SISTERS. YOU ARE TO ABORT LAUNCH IMMEDIATELY! DO YOU COPY? THIS IS SIG

SEC TEAM ONE HERE. WE FOUND THE BAY GUARD UNCONSCIOUS. THE SHIP'S GONE.

SEC TEAM TWO HERE. NO RESISTANCE IN CONTROL BAY 3. ONE ANGRY CIVILIAN, THOUGH.

IS THAT THE PERPETRATOR?

THAT'S MY SHIP!!

COME BACK! COME BACK, DAMN YOU!

NEGATIVE GIR, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE IT—BUT IT'S MR. KIRCHNER

WHAT'S UP KIRCHNER? YOU GOT THE ORDER WHY DIDN'T YOU OVERRIDE THEIR LAUNCH SEQUENCE?

I.. I DON'T KNOW.

IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN... RIGHT.

GENERAL ALERT! INTERCEPT INTRUDER IN SECURITY SECTOR!

HMMM WE'RE SUPPOSED TO KEEP OUR EYES OPEN FOR AN UNAUTHORIZED SHIP HEADING FOR MELLANARES SPACE.

US?

RELAX, POMRU, IT'S A GENERAL ORDER. IT'S ONLY OUR PROBLEM IF WE SEE IT.

HEY!

WHAT THE...

I SEE IT.

I KNEW IT.

SPECTRE SQUADRON — INTERCEPT THAT SHIP!

ATTENTION SHIP! YOU ARE ORDERED TO HALT BY COMMAND OF THE ALLIANCE!

OH, THAT'S TELLING THEM.

UM, SO WHAT DO WE DO IF THEY DON'T WANT TO STOP?

HEY, NO PROBLEM SARGE.

WE JUST DISABLE THE ENGINES!

NO!

NICE GOING, SWEETUMS, NOW WE HAVE TO TOW IT BACK.

OH.

SARGE! LOOK AT THE SCOPE!

OH NO! NOT NOW!

BREEP! BREEP! BREEP!

MELLANARES ATTACK!! DEFENSE FORMATION B! PROTECT THE SHIP!!

HOLD YOUR FIRE!

MOVE INTO PROTECTIVE DIAMOND - SLOWLY. WE ARE MASSIVELY OUTNUMBERED.

PROTECT EACH OTHER'S BACKS!

I SUPPOSE IT'S TOO LATE TO REQUEST A TRANSFER.

NICE WORKIN' WITH YA, SARGE.

SHIELDS UP. STANDING BY.

WADE, GIVE ME MORE POWER!

WAIT! THERE'S A STRANGE **ENERGY SOURCE** APPROACHING FROM SECTOR 41.

LOOK AT THOSE READINGS!

FORGET THE SCOPE AND KEEP OUR **SHIELDS** UP!

BUT I'VE NEVER **SEEN**...

LOOK OUT!

LLL

WE'RE HIT!

DYNO SWORD ENGAGED... HAWKEYE, FALL BACK!

POMRU, WHAT...

SARGE!! THE ENERGY SOURCE— IT'S HERE!!

CAT MOTHER!.. WHAT IS IT?!

POMRU, IS THAT OUR ENERGY SOURCE?

I CAN'T TELL. THE READINGS HAVE GONE OFF THE SCALE.

IF WE GET OUTTA THIS, WE GOTTA GET A BIGGER SCALE.

BY THE KHAN!

NEXT THE MAN WITH THE GUNSIGHT MIND

CARGONAUTS™

DAMMIT!!

FORMS! FORMS! FORMS!!

Red Tape

"FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION, AND OFTEN OBLITERATES IT. THAT IS THE IRON LAW OF BUREAUCRACY." - A. GILLILAND

SCRIPT: PHIL FOGLIO PENCILS: PAUL GUINAN INKS: SAM GRAINGER
LETTERS: ED KING COLORS: RICK TAYLOR EDITS: RICK OLIVER

AND THEN *MORE* FORMS- JUST TO GET THE *RIGHT* FORMS!

GIVE ME STRENGTH.

I'M TELLING YOU *RUSSEL*, THINGS HAVE GONE DOWNHILL EVER SINCE TAYLOR, OUR NAVIGATOR, WENT SPACE-HAPPY AND *STOLE* OUR SHIP. EVERYTHING I *HAD* WAS TIED UP IN THE *SEVEN SISTERS*.

NOW, ZEPHRAM, *RELAX*! GENERAL IPPOLITOV *SAID* THAT THE MILITARY WOULD REPLACE OUR SHIP FOR US. WE JUST HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE PROPER CHANNELS.

IT SAYS HERE THAT YOUR CASE IS BEING ASSIGNED TO LIEUTENANT *GORMAN*...

THERE ARE 60,527 OFFICES IN THIS SECTION OF SIGMA BASE. THIS IS ONE OF THEM.

...THEN, IF AND WHEN IT COMES BACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE ALLOCATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE, YOUR REQUEST WILL BE PUT BEFORE THE VETERANS' FINANCIAL BUDGETARY ALLOWANCE REVIEW BOARD. THAT USUALLY TAKES ABOUT TWO MONTHS...

...THEN, OF COURSE, WE HAVE TO SEND IT UP THE CHAIN OF COMMAND TO GET IT APPROVED BY A QUARTERMASTER REVIEW BOARD. THAT CONVENES TWICE A YEAR, AND THERE IT'LL BE FILED TO BE CROSS-REFERENCED AGAINST ANY PRIOR REQUESTS. IF INDEED THERE ARE NO SUCH REQUESTS ON FILE...

...WHY THEN, THE SHIP IS ***YOURS***. ANY QUESTIONS?

YEAH. WHAT'VE YOU GOT AGAINST ME?

YOU'RE A ***CIVILIAN***, CAPTAIN CLANTON.

WHAT?!

DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK I'M GOING TO JUST ***GIVE*** YOU A SHIP? I CAN'T GO AROUND HANDING THEM OUT TO ***ANYBODY*** WHO CLAIMS THEY NEED ONE. JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME, CLANTON, IF YOU WANT ONE OF ***MY*** SHIPS, YOU'LL BE HERE 'TILL DOOMSDAY.

GOOD MORNING.

WE LL *NEVER* GET OUT OF HERE

WE'RE NOT GONNA LET THAT TOAD STOP US.

I HAPPEN TO KNOW THIS *TAVITAN* TECHNO. HE *OWES* ME A *FAVOR.*

♪TIME, TIME, TIME IS ON MY SIDE YES, IT IS. ♪

54.16.CN6 SUPPLY

LIEUTENANT GORMAN?

54.16.CN6 SUP

YES?

THE LIEUTENANT GORMAN? OFFICE OF SUPPLY?

UH... Y-YES?

THE LIEUTENANT *ALEXIS* GORMAN WHO'S GIVING CAPTAIN CLANTON A HARD TIME?

M-MAYBE.

ARE YOU *THE* LIEUTENANT ALEXIS GORMAN WHO IS SHAFTING MY *GOOD PAL?*...

OH!...THAT LIEUTENANT GORMAN! *NO,* YOU'VE GOT THE *WRONG* GUY!

GEE, YOU SURE *LOOK* LIKE HIM; HOW CAN I BE *SURE?*

REFIT BAY 211 ...0800 TOMORROW!

TO CRIME!

AH, DOT DEMM ÖFER DERE. TABLE TEW.

I'M INSPECTOR GENERAL *ST. LOUIS.*

GORMAN SENT ME.

CAPTAIN ZEPHRAM LAMBERT?

ERRR...

HE SAYS THAT YOU HAVE A ***SHIP*** FOR HIRE. I'D LIKE TO BOOK PASSAGE TO BARTA 5.

NO PROBLEMS? GOOD. I'LL SEE YOU AT 1300 TOMORROW.

GORMAN SENT US A JOB? I DON'T GET IT.

WELL, WE'RE GONNA NEED A ***NAVIGATOR***. NOW, I JUST HAPPEN TO KNOW THIS GUY LOOKING FOR A BERTH...

NEXT DAY...

CAPTAIN, THIS IS ***JASMINE T. STEWART***, NAVIGATOR CLASS A.

CALL ME JAZZ, *PLEASE*.

I LOOKED OVER YOUR ***FILE*** LAST NIGHT, JAZZ. WELCOME ABOARD.

WELL, ALL ***RIGHT***, CAP'N. NOW LET'S GO SEE THIS ***NEW*** SHIP OF YOURS.

CAUTION: ENTERING ZERO GRAVITY FIELD

WARNING

MY NAME'S CLANTON. I'M SUPPOSED TO PICK UP A SHIP?

RIGHT *BEHIND* YOU. YOU COLLECT *ANTIQUES?*

OHMYGOD.

Star of Milwaee

TRICKED! GORMAN KNEW THAT IF WE TOOK A JOB AND THEN REFUSED THIS SHIP WE'D DEFAULT ON OUR CONTRACT!

OH, ZEPHRAM, I'M SORRY...

HEY! LET'S AT LEAST TAKE A LOOK AT IT... HOW BAD CAN IT...

5

...BE? WHAT THE...HEY! THIS STUFF IS BRAND NEW!

CAP'N, THAT'S THE NEW KIWI 3000 COMPUTER CONSOLE. BUT THOSE AREN'T EVEN OUT YET.

BUT WHAT... THOSE ARE THE NEW MULTI-PHASE RADAR DISPLAYS. THEY'RE STILL IN THE EXPERIMENTAL STAGE.

EXPERIMENTAL?! BUT...

OF COURSE! THIS IS A MILITARY TEST SHIP! THE HULL IS JUST A FACADE IT'S BEEN COMPLETELY REBUILT. WHO KNOWS WHAT THIS THING CAN DO? GORMAN MUST'VE MADE A MISTAKE!

C'MON, I'VE *GOT* TO SEE THE *ENGINE* ON THIS THING.

RIGHT. LAMBERT, CHECK OUR FUEL AND SUPPLY LEVELS AND HAVE OUR STUFF DELIVERED FROM THE HOTEL.

YESSIR.

I THINK THAT'S THE *PHONE*.

WWW *BREEEP!*

GORMAN HERE. DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO GET ANOTHER SHIP. YOU'RE *STUCK* WITH...

WE *LOVE* THE SHIP. THANK YOU. GOOD MORNING.

?

GET ME THE FILE ON THE *STAR OF MILWAUKEE!!*

WELL, IT'S IN THE ENGINE *BAY*... SO IT'S GOTTA BE THE *ENGINE*.

ARE YOU *SURE* ABOUT THAT?

HELL, NO! BUT I THINK IT'LL DO.

1300 HOURS...

INSPECTOR GENERAL THALIA ST. LOUIS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO COME ABOARD.

PERMISSION GRANTED. WELCOME ABOARD, GENERAL. WE'RE READY TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.

CENTRAL [illegible]R LOCK

STAR OF MILWAUKEE, YOU ARE FREE AND CLEAR TO NAVIGATE. OVER.

331406

ROGER, BASE 6. WE ARE READY TO *WARP*. OVER.

DESTINATION LINES CLEAR AND LOCKED.

POWER ON 10 AND HOLDING.

RUSSELL

ROGER, MILWAUKEE. BON VOYAGE AND WARP AT WILL. OVER.

NO!! STOP THEM!!

PREPARE FOR WARP.

TO BE CONTINUED!